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NEW LIGHT ON THE PROBLEM OF DISEASE

In looking through my library to find a subject which might interest you, I picked up Geoffrey Hodson's book: **NEW LIGHT ON THE PROBLEM OF DISEASE**. He treats the subject from a Theosophical viewpoint, and begins with this arresting thought:

"Disease is the natural concomitant of imperfection; it is inherent in the nature of the solar system, and in the life force and consciousness embodied in that system; otherwise it could not exist. As the whole system is evolving and is at present imperfect, disease on any planet is but the expression of that imperfection in one kingdom of nature or another.

"If one could trace them, diseases would be found in the mineral kingdom, as fatigue has already been discovered, and as already found in the vegetable, animal and human kingdoms. The study of individual cases, and of individual actions which produce the karma of disease, should not blind one to the fact that in the early stages of evolution, disease is a universal phenomenon. Behind every disease there is a disease consciousness, which finds expression and embodiment in each appearance of that disease." Thus all cancer patients, all polio patients, or any other group of persons afflicted with the same type of disease, are related to each other by the affinity of their disease. "Complete understanding of the operations of karma, the law of cause and effect, will not be found by a study of individual cases alone. Group disease and group karma must also be studied. Disease is inherent in Nature, and will so continue until a certain standard of perfection has been attained."

In studying the root cause of disease, Mr. Hodson considers the whole man, the work-a-day self plus the higher SELF - the soul, or ego, and its aspirations. He says: "this root cause of every individual case of disease lies in a resistance to the right of the ego or higher Self, to rule his personality, and, a refusal to listen to the voice of conscience." It is important always to keep in mind the Theosophical teaching that man has many past lives, their

actions creating results to be worked out in future incarnations. He says there is a type of karma "which results from the waywardness of the personality and the deliberate closing of the ears to the intuitive urge of the higher Self. This results in sins of commission, those positive acts which are contrary to the fundamental principle of unity."

Then he gives the negative cause of disease as being "the inexperience of the ego, and his failure to provide the necessary guidance to the personality," bringing about "sins of omission, self-indulgences and failures in self-discipline and acts of service." . . . "The positive sins of commission result in active disease; the negative sins of omission produce latent disease conditions, which may or may not work out as active, physical complaints: these latter show themselves more especially as deficiencies in character, and the absence of qualities which make a healthy life."

He explains at length that the average condition is a mixture of the positive and negative types. Another interesting observation is that those people whose diseases come from the personality, through willfulness and disobedience, respond best to purely physical, medical treatment; while those people whose diseases come from a soul condition of ignorance or inadequacy, require psychological treatment.

It would seem that we need to look upon man in a new light. Every man is a creator, the builder of his own personal universe, which is composed of his bodies and his immediate environment. His bodies are his physical body, his etheric or vital body, his emotional, mental, higher mental, and spiritual bodies. These bodies "are himself, externalized, objective manifestations of his inner capacities." This personal universe includes his environment which is also, in a measure, a representation of his own nature, because his nature depends not so much upon the physical conditions which surround him, as upon his own personal reaction to those surroundings.

From this standpoint Mr. Hodson makes the deduction that "the environment of no two people is the same, even though

they live together." Environment, too, plays a big part in the health or disease of our lives, and in a measure indicates what in ourselves needs to be improved in the way of habits, qualities, characteristics. It is interesting to note that various diseases affect also the subtler matter of the emotional and mental planes. As people who think alike tend to congregate together, so do the finer grades of matter, which have learned to vibrate at certain disease rates, tend to gather into a sort of reservoir; and those of us whose imperfections indicate the need of reform, might find that in the prenatal life, some of these imperfect disease laden vibrations had been built into our bodies through the affinity of like to like.

"While minor diseases which occur through infection need not necessarily have a super-physical origin, chronic disease always has its super-physical aspect. Chronic diseases have their origin in actions which are deliberate denials by the mind of certain aspects of truth - actions which are persisted in, in spite of the actor's knowledge of their essentially unlawful character." Witness the inhuman cruelty which has in past ages, and tragically, still does, characterize certain rulers and their subordinates. Such cruelty is a remnant of the savage state, out of which the actors have definitely, although perhaps recently evolved... In pursuing, after they had become civilized, conduct which from a karmic viewpoint was relatively harmless in the savage (because he knew no better), they denied the voice of the higher Self. That voice speaks in the name of UNITY, which is a fundamental truth. Cruelty is a denial of unity. Civilized cruelty is a conscious denial. The karma of such actions reacts deeply upon both mind and body. Cruelty in one form or another is the most general cause of disease. That is why disease in itself appears to be so cruel.

Mr. Hodson says that the greatest antidote to all disease is a recognition of unity, and its expression through love and service. All sufferers should, therefore, be taught the fundamental law of unity and be inspired to develop and live by love. This is perhaps the simplest method of supplying a health that reaches through all of man's bodies. We usually think of love as between parent and child; man and wife; friend and friend, but, there is a loving-kindness which can go outward to all human beings with a healing

touch, because it gives but does not hold. The great majority of sufferers simply require to develop the quality of love; to be taught to radiate affection on all, especially those within their immediate environment.

Mr. Hodson further says: "Ultimately disease will be cured along the following lines: the sufferer will either meditate to discover the deficiency of character which made possible the karma-producing actions, or, he will consult a spiritual teacher, and then retire in order to develop and learn to express the required quality." This is the ideal way of healing. There have been cases where the ego was able to remedy the deficiency and satisfy the karmic obligation entirely in terms of change of consciousness. Many people who are moderately, but not perfectly healthy, suffer from low vitality, though never experiencing active disease. They, too, need to discover their inherent fault and replace it with the opposite virtue.

A little known but important point is this: There is an inviolable law which ordains that, where the veil which hides the invisible is pierced, the knowledge and power which are revealed and released, must be used for the furtherance of the evolutionary scheme. All misuse of power, all prostitution of invisible and occult agencies and intelligences, brings down upon the person the heavy karma of being himself the victim of the agencies and forces which he has employed.

Listen carefully to this closing thought: "Every patient could heal himself, could he but lift his consciousness to discover and release the healing powers of the Christ within himself. Christ is the great Healer of the world; the Christ spirit in man is the great, the true, the natural Healer in man. By the aid of the spiritual light shining within himself, man may see his errors and deficiencies; may understand the working of the Law by which he suffers. Thus strengthened and illumined, he may find the power to remedy his lack, and the knowledge to satisfy the demands of the great Law of Karma." Thus will he be "made whole" as Jesus said. Thus will he be healed.

THE STORY OF REINCARNATION

The hypothesis of reincarnation is not a new invention of modern minds. Nor is it borrowed from any particular religion. It is the philosophical belief and conviction of the majority of the world's population, and is a part of the tradition of many lands.

This may seem strange to those of you who are just beginning the study of this particular concept, because those who have been reared in the Christian tradition or the Jewish tradition of the west have known only the concept of one life, of one chance to earn either eternal bliss or eternal torment. You will ask how it is then that the idea of reincarnation, of being born time after time with repeated opportunities to grow towards moral and spiritual greatness belongs to the world at large and yet is omitted from western philosophy and from the dogmas of the western religions.

We will return to that question in a few minutes, but first I want to make it clear to you just how world-wide this idea is.

The historical material which I shall bring you in this broadcast is derived largely from a book called "Reincarnation" by our good friend Manly P. Hall, who writes, "As may be expected of any widely diffused belief, reincarnation has been variously stated according to the spiritual and rational power of its interpreters. It is obvious that the Eskimo concept should be less philosophical and detailed than that of a great East Indian scholar. In substance both agree, but each interprets the law according to his own world of experience."

For instance, among the Eskimos it is the law that the old and feeble shall not become burdens on the tribe. So an old member who feels that his time is drawing near seeks out a newly married couple and asks permission to be their child. Upon receiving such permission he wanders off to some remote place and commits suicide, confident that he will soon be reborn into the family of his choice.

As another instance of simple thinking, the ancient Druids

of Britain and Gaul would sometimes borrow money and give a promissory note to repay it in the next incarnation. There are in the British Museum receipts and other Druidic legal remains to prove this.

But the Upanishads, the ancient sacred books of India, inspired by the Vedas, are full of profound philosophical observations on the doctrine of reincarnation. That doctrine was a major tenet of Brahmanism for many centuries before the birth of the Buddhist religion. And Gautama Buddha, the great founder of the Buddhist religion 600 years before Christ, made public the most priceless secret of esoteric Brahmanism, Reincarnation, the way of spiritual democracy, because he was opposed to the intolerance of the Brahman caste system into which he was born.

In the strange land of Tibet we have a history of a reincarnating hierarchy, the same rulers appearing again and again under different names and personalities according to the firm belief of priesthood and laity. Despite the superstitions of the common people and the demonism in the religion of Lamaism, reincarnation stands as the Great Law in Tibet.

The Vedanta philosophy based on the same sources as the oriental religions clearly states the fundamentals of reincarnation and karma.

But it was Buddhism which was a major influence in spreading over the world the hitherto secret knowledge of the doctrine of reincarnation. Buddhism was carried into China and Japan in the first century, A.D. Its twin doctrines of reincarnation and karma were accepted there at once and the sanskrit language of Buddhism was put into Chinese characters. The art of printing was developed in China to meet the demand for Buddhist literature. Their first book, printed in 868 A.D. was discovered in 1907 and now rests in the British Museum. That book contains the sentence of the Buddha which begins, "I recall that during my 500 lives..." and so on. Of all the sects of Buddhism, started by various saints and sages - and there were 20 sects or denominations in Japan alone - all but one of them, the Zen Buddhism of Japan, proclaim the laws of reincarnation and karma.

The great Pythagoras in Greece and Rome in the 6th century B.C. was the first non-Brahmin in the world to be initiated into the esoteric rites of Buddhism and he was given the name of Yavan-charga by which name he is revered in India to this day. He established his school of philosophy at Crotona in southern Italy (called Magna Graecia at the time) and accepted special students from all over the world. To his esoteric students Pythagoras taught the doctrine of reincarnation but, unlike the Buddha, he bound his students by oath to secrecy on that teaching.

Then in the 4th century B.C. Plato wrote his dialogs as interpretations of Pythagoras, and established his Academy which endured for nine centuries. Plato taught reincarnation as essential to man's ultimate perfection.

In the Mohammedan orthodoxy reincarnation is a disputed point. But various of its sects, namely the Shi-a Moslems, the Druses, and the Dervishes have adopted the teaching.

And even among the American Indians Mr. Hall's research has disclosed many forms of this belief. The Sioux Indians have records of braves who remembered their past lives. The Dakota Indians have an esoteric teaching that one is born four times as a man and four times as a woman. And so on. "But the Indians as a whole were so repelled by the intolerance of the white man towards their beliefs that they withdrew to secrecy, so that it seems likely that only initiates of the Indian mystical societies now have an understanding of reincarnation and karma."

Since these two doctrines form an integral part of all teaching of the ancient world and of a major portion of the modern world, how can one account for their disappearance from the western world?

Theosophy teaches that God has a Plan and that Plan is evolution. So one view can well be that the very withholding of such knowledge could serve a constructive purpose for human evolution. For the result has been that western man, convinced that he has no chance but in this one life to learn, to do, and to be, has wasted little time and his achievements have been remarkable. He has become the world's man of action and achievement.

But in the process a sort of despair has begun to creep in as the effort lost spiritual significance and came to be instead mercenary and materialistic. Thinking men have begun more and more to succumb to skepticism. They had been taught the commandment "Be ye perfect", yet men fell far short in the allotted space of a single lifetime. How, they asked, was it possible between infancy and old age to attain the perfection which eternity demands. Too, they began to doubt the justice of "only one chance" in which a few had everything in their favor for that chance while others had every known handicap.

To the Occident The Theosophical Society has restored the lost knowledge of the natural laws of reincarnation, karma, and repeated opportunity. And to the Orient Theosophy has explained the tremendous value of effort on the part of the individual. It has had its share in awakening the Orient from its paralyzing lethargy.

Contrary to common opinion the New Testament is not without its references to reincarnation; and men of religion in the west can take comfort in the few references I bring you. First: the question was asked of Jesus "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Born blind because he sinned? How could the question have been asked had there been no belief in a former life on earth? Second: Jesus himself asked a strange question of his disciples, saying "Who do men say that I am?" Their answer showed that they had been discussing the point, for some replied that he was thought to be Elias reborn and others that he was Jeremiah. But Jesus explained that Elias had already been born among them without their recognizing him..."and they knew that he spoke of John the Baptist." It was John who was Elias reborn.

And finally in the Book of Revelation appears this powerful sentence, "And him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go forth no more." In other words, he that masters himself, he that overcomes weakness and ignorance will need no further incarnations. Of such is the Temple of God not made with hands, and of such is the "Communion of Saints."

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THOUGHT

Did you ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes when you think? We take thinking for granted just as we take good health and eyesight. We ought, however, to understand somewhat of the mechanism of thinking. "A student of Theosophy trains himself in the art of thinking and consequently his thought is much more powerful than that of the untrained man, and is likely to influence a wider circle, producing a much greater effect. This happens quite outside of his own consciousness, without his making any effort in the matter. But just because he has learned the mighty power of thought, it becomes his duty to use it for the helping of others, and in order to do this effectively, he must understand exactly how it acts. One of the most striking characteristics of the unseen world which lies all about us, is the ready response to the influences of human thought and emotion.

"It is difficult for those who have not studied the subject, to grasp the absolute reality of these forces - to understand that their action is in every respect as definite upon the finer type of matter as is that of steam or electricity upon physical matter." In fact, radio and television are very up-to-date illustrations of the use of unseen wavelength vibrations. It is such vibrations, though on other wavelengths, which produce thought and bring it to birth through the brain-instrument.

Every one knows that a man who has at his disposal a large amount of electrical or steam power can do useful work and produce definite results; but few people know that every man, woman and child has at hand a certain amount of this other and higher power; that, with it he can produce results equally definite and equally real.

As matters stand at present only a few men can have among their resources, any large amount of physical forces. Only a few can become rich by their means; but it is a prominent feature of the unseen side of life that every human being, rich or poor, old or young, has already at his disposal a large amount of mental force. Therefore, the gifts and potencies of these higher worlds of thought and emotion, which are obtained by the right use of this force, are within

the reach of all. Here, then, is a power possessed by all, though intelligently used by a very few. A little investigation, then, seems well worth while. As in our ignorance we often employ thought to our own detriment and that of others, we need to remember that the possession of power means responsibility. As thought vibrates in subtle matter, it takes shape, so that when we think, we make thought-forms. These thought-forms persist for a time, according to the definiteness and energy of our thinking. This is the reason for that strange phrase, "Thoughts are Things." The thinking and feeling part of man's nature expresses itself in radiant matter so ethereal and fine that we cannot see it. A man absorbed in a "brown study" is totally oblivious of the people or children who may be scrambling around him; he is "living" in his mental body we say. You see his physical body, but he, the Thinker, is not present. In the same way, a person terribly in love, is definitely centered in his emotional body, just as a man climbing a mountain is focussed in his physical body. The true man, the ego, has a vehicle with a very high rate of vibration called the bliss body. Webster defines the word Ego as "the Self, considered as the seat of the consciousness." The physical brain is not the originator of thought; it is the instrument used by the Thinker - the true man behind the scenes.

When the ego thinks, the matter of his mental body vibrates according to the nature of the thought, and is instantly radioed to the brain, linking the outer man with the Thinker - his real self. "Everybody when it occurs to him, will recognize the indirect action of thought, for it is obvious that a man must think before he can do anything, and the thought is the motive power of his action, just as the water is the motive power of the mill. But people do not generally know that thought has also a direct action on matter - that whether or not a man translates his thought into a deed, the thought itself has already produced an effect." Acting upon mental matter, the thought has set it in motion, showing itself as a wave-length, producing a cause. That vibration is communicated to external, physical matter and an effect has occurred. Thought is thus seen to be a very real and precise power. And - the point of vivid interest about it is, that every one of us possesses this power. But, be it remembered, power entails responsibility.

In developing the power of thought, habit is a potent force.

Mental bodies accustomed to a certain type of vibration, learn to reproduce it easily and readily. A thought entertained today will be much easier to think tomorrow; and this is equally true, whether the thought be good, bad or just plain silly. When feeling enters into the thought it stirs up the denser matter of the emotional body, just as the wind disturbs the surface of the sea. A wrong thought which blinds reason, can easily arouse a wrong emotion, such as anger, self-pity, resentment. But a kind thought will produce a happy emotion. These thoughts take forms, beautiful or ugly like the expressed quality, and all having a profound reaction on the physical self. If you are a happy person, thinking harmonious and kindly thoughts, you generate a magnetism that draws people to you - they like you; your inner bodies have lovely forms in the aura, and rhythmic sounds (unheard physically) radiate from you. You are charming and unselfish. And of course the reverse is also true of those who habitually think unkind or coarse things, who are self-centered and crabby. An unseen ugliness radiates from them. Another illustration of the way thoughts affect people is the "feel" of houses, buildings, ships, even cities and countries. A sensitive person entering a place which has been long inhabited by gloomy or irritable people, will feel that the place is inimical, dreary, depressing. On the other hand when it has been occupied by peaceful thinking people, it is pleasant, cozy, relaxing, satisfying. The thoughts and feelings which have been generated there have left their invisible impress, by way of subtle vibrations, on the walls, the hangings, drapes, furnishings so that if one stays long in the place he will be affected and influenced by this thought legacy. One is accustomed to saying that such and such a house or city has its own special "atmosphere."

Now, as we humans move through life we create our own world atmosphere. Each and every one first makes thought-forms which shoot straight out away from the thinker aimed at some definite objective or person; second, thoughts about the self hover around the thinker and follow him wherever he goes; and third, there are thoughts which he leaves behind as a sort of trail when he moves about. The whole inner atmosphere of any town is filled with thoughts of this third type, vague and indeterminate. As men walk in a city (or are in places where people gather), they are picking their mental

way through masses of thoughts, and if the minds are not definitely occupied with their own thoughts, these wandering fragments of other people's thinking can seriously affect them. Most of these float through an idle mind, without arousing any particular interest. But now and then such a mental fragment attracts attention; the mind fastens on it, entertains it for a moment, dismisses it. But, (an important point) it goes out stronger than when it arrived, because of the added vitality given to it. If at any time you review your thinking for the past ten minutes, you will be surprised to discover how many idle and useless fancies have passed through your mind during that time. Not one-quarter are your own; they are simply fragments picked up from the mental world. In most cases they are quite useless and on the whole not for the best interest of any one.

Modern advertising and propaganda both recognize, in human thinking, this factor of intensifying the power of suggested thinking, whether or not they understand the technique involved. When once an individual recognizes it, he begins to select with conscious choice the thoughts which he will entertain and which he is willing to send forth strengthened by him into the world atmosphere. This is one meaning of responsibility as applied to thought. The power of choice in thinking, added to the knowledge that "as a man thinketh so is he," gives you a new sense of responsibility for the use you make of your thinking. And you can make yourself what you will by dwelling on the qualities you admire, and so gain in strength, serenity, and peace.

These qualities, when once they are your own, impinge on the mental and emotional bodies of your fellowman and tend to reproduce themselves in him. If he is fighting a battle against passion, fear, or depression, their stately rhythm will help him and steady him. Is it not true then that your gain is his gain also? Humanity is so truly one that no one can advance or retreat without helping or hindering others.

So keep these points in mind: 1st, behind all your physical activity lies your thought which guides it; 2nd, the world atmosphere is a reservoir of thought; and 3rd, each does his share to purify or contaminate that reservoir. Yours is the power of choice.

MIND POWER

Mind power is the critical power in the world today. Critical because the method of its use is affecting the trend of history and of civilization.

Modern man worships mind. He even identifies it with God in the term "divine mind" and concludes that that is the ultimate. There is a natural reason for this adulation which is paid to Mind and that reason lies in the little known Theosophical explanation that our Race, the Caucasian race, is, in the evolutionary scheme, a mental race intent on developing completely the mental bodies of its members as well as their mental capacities.

All things go along together in an orderly fashion in human evolution. Theosophy explains that our race is the 5th great Race in the world scheme, that five senses have been developed for its experience, and that it is primarily concerned with the fifth principle in man called manas, or the thinking principle. Also that the majority of us in America and Europe belong to the Teutonic or fifth subrace of the fifth Root Race.

So -- what more natural than that our critical problems at this stage of history should be concerned with the right use of the fifth principle, or mind? And what more natural than that many schools of thought should place mind in the category of highest importance?

At this point it might be well to introduce to our radio audience a second sanskrit word to place alongside the now familiar sanskrit word, karma. That new word rhymes with it and is dharma, D-H-A-R-M-A. It is coming slowly into use in English because its meaning, like that of karma, can only be conveyed in our language by full sentences. When it is glibly translated as "duty", the idea given is woefully inadequate. Dharma implies the recognition of a person's stage in soul evolution plus a recognition of what he needs to do next to round out his growth. It is so deeply personal to each individual that no one person can judge the dharma of another. But groups also have their group-dharma as they have their group-karma. The ancient wisdom reveals

that the dharma of both the Fifth Root Race and the fifth sub-race is that of developing the mental principle and the mental bodies of all its members. This means that humanity has evolved through physical trials and emotional trials and has reached the point in evolution when its growth can best be served by mental trials. We are all today on trial mentally. That is our dharma.

Deep in the unconscious mind of all of us is an awareness of this dharma and its inexorable pressure in the direction of the evolutionary flow. Therefore it comes to the surface in our conscious minds as an exaggerated idea of the importance of mind, and as a tendency to worship it as the ultimate, the final goal of mankind.

But Theosophy enlarges the horizon and places mind in its rightful position not at the top and certainly not at the bottom but rather uncomfortably in the middle. In that position in the scheme of man, mind is seen as the highest principle of the personality or lower man, and the lowest principle of the soul, or higher man.

From that intermediate position the mind functions as master of all below it - emotions, health, and activity - and as servant of all above it -- compassion, divine will, and creative energy. So Mind stands revealed as actually the unifying point between spirit and matter which Mme. Blavatsky, a Founder of The Theosophical Society, meant when she defined man in this way: "Man is that creature anywhere in the universe in whom highest spirit and lowest matter are linked by intelligence." As an aside, it is fascinating, though futile, to speculate on what forms the union of spirit and matter by intellect could take in other worlds. But we have enough to do trying to understand ourselves. The ancient command "Know thyself" seems likely to be the last command we shall fulfill.

Mind, poised in the center, so to speak, of man's full nature can look up to investigate the universe and to perceive spiritual values, and it can look down to analyse the material world and to control his own personality, his feelings, his actions and even his bodily functions. The mind, in its perfected state, is thus the master of the body and the servant of the soul.

Things go wrong when the vision is lost and a man's mind becomes the servant of his body or of his emotions. As long as the mind takes orders from the higher Self it is a faithful administrator; and a noble character is evidence thereof. But when the mind takes things into its own hands - look out. Mind power uncontrolled by soul power can be disastrously destructive. No more dreadful use of mind can be conceived than the applying of its fiendish imaginings to the torture, physical or psychological, of its fellow beings. And nothing is more disheartening to the noble-minded scientists of our time than to see their discoveries and inventions being used for the destruction of life and resources instead of for their increase. The noble mind, being touched with soul consciousness, applies itself to forwarding the evolution of mankind; but the self-sufficient mind is willing to stand against evolution. When mind power is used to create misery or want for others, when it employs a logic that is silly to persuade less intelligent people to do its will regardless of dharma - that is Mind, the Schemer, the source of endless trouble, hardly to be worshipped.

So I suggest when you are urged to use your mind power for the glorification of yourself, to bring to yourself purely material things, that you take time out to consider what use you wish to make of your mind. If you recognize that your world is indulging in a mental process of skill with a self-centered purpose only, you will probably hesitate to call it divine - or even noble. You will know that it is your lower mind that is involved.

When you are asked to use your mind power for the good of others you will know that it is your higher mind - your upward looking mind that is being addressed.

Your mind power is the key to your personality in this particular lifetime. Your soul power is your record of growth through many lives. It is important to remember this distinction in order to understand yourself. Your higher self, your soul, has the capacity to recognize or discover principles in Nature. Your mind alone cannot. What it can do is interpret the principles in terms of the particular for other minds to absorb. Similarly your soul can experience illumination. Your mind cannot. But it can describe the experience.

An excellent example of this in fiction occurred in "The Razor's Edge", a popular novel of a few years back in which a character surrounded by sophistication and pettiness yet had the soul power to set out alone on his search. His moment of illumination when an understanding of life came to him seemed utterly indescribable yet the mind of its author, Somerset Maugham, described it with most telling effectiveness. Another more recent novel, "I, My Ancestor" accomplishes nearly the same result.

These are straws, in the wind, indications for the thinking man that there are ways of touching something higher than mind. For those who feel impelled to a deeper study of this somewhat bewildering subject, I can recommend no finer and more illuminating book than one by Annie Besant called "Thought Power: Its Control and Culture." It is not light reading; it is good food for the student. And as Dr. Besant says in the foreword to the book "Those who would fulfill the maxim, 'Know Thyself', must not shrink from a little mental exertion nor must expect mental food to drop ready-cooked from the sky into a lazily opened mouth."

When once you recognize yourself as being a soul in control of your mind - as it is in control of your feelings and your actions - your soul power will color your mind power. And the Theosophical teaching that there are seven principles in man, two of which are higher than the loftiest power of mind will seem deeply reasonable to you.

If the mind power of nations is to carry the world forward into a new age of cooperation and friendly effort, then that mind power must be touched with soul power. All self-seeking is of the mind alone. But compassion, the will to good, and the creative capacity to achieve are soul powers which nations as well as men must attain if they would make right use of mind power. No nation can be greater than the combined mind power of its people. Every man and woman in this nation is responsible to his country because he is responsible for himself. He can allow his mind to be his tempter or a schemer for his own petty glorification. Or he can know his mind for what it is and train it to be the master of his lower nature and the servant of his higher. Mind power which is linked with soul power inevitably points the way towards nobility of character, in persons and in nations.

GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

A festival time in any town or city gives a clearcut illustration of the power of group consciousness over great numbers of people. For the time being under the spell of enthusiasm and desire to see and take part in a great spectacle, we are lifted out of our ordinary humdrum selves, and feel the impact of a happy excitement and the expression of a greater joyousness. Without realizing it, we are experiencing in the emotional consciousness the power of unity - of group consciousness - of Oneness. One of the results of this unification is that it is easier to smile at passers-by, to enter into friendly and brotherly courtesies, and even to make small sacrifices of some advantages we may have gained.

We have been told of an extraordinary unity of consciousness which prevailed on the occasion of the funeral cortege of the British Queen Victoria which passed through the streets of London where millions gathered, and wept as one when the silent Queen passed by for the last time. Those whose "inner eye" could see have told that the demonstration of love and reverence was like a great flood of light uniting the minds and hearts of the people and carrying them to spiritual heights they normally could not reach by themselves. It expanded their inner vehicles of consciousness beyond the point of their normal self-centeredness, for they all thought only of the great Queen and so, being lifted out of themselves, they reached collectively a state of unity which greatly advanced their development.

The same thing happened to the American people at the time of the death of President Roosevelt. For three days the whole nation, putting aside quarrels and political differences, mourned his passing. During the unprecedented silence of commercial radio, and the devotion of all radio time to the drama of the funeral train and the stories of the president's life -- during that time we lived the American motto "United we stand." At such times, with millions of hearts and minds tuned to one great thought, the whole nation vibrates as an entity. There is tremendous power in such group consciousness. Who, knowing the life and light of the inner worlds where our greater selves dwell,

can doubt but that we all, in our togetherness, reached greater heights than we could have reached alone. Not one but was the better for such an experience.

These are dynamic and special illustrations of group consciousness - of brotherhood at work. But through long ages group consciousness has been a general means whereby humanity has learned to get along with itself. From the family unit to the clan, to the tribe, through all the aggregations of "moreness" to the nation and federations of nations, we have moved and shall inevitably move, sometime, into the group consciousness of world federation. Each expansion has been accompanied by a more inclusive consciousness. Today our group-awareness functions on a larger scale than ever before in history; there are the service clubs and women's clubs, international as well as national and local in character and activity. The Rotary Clubs, the Lions, the Elks, the Masonic Orders, all are based more or less on the ideal of service to others, and from that basis they, probably unwittingly, unify themselves.

There is another kind of group service and group consciousness which is un-named and largely unknown, for even its members do not always know each other. They are drawn together in one way or another. Actually they are friends and co-workers of former lives, drawn again to their destined role. They are all fundamentally pioneers in type. Whenever the march of progress demands a new step forward, these "shocktroops" in some mysterious way, unknown and unnamed, find their enthusiasm aroused over some new or progressive idea, and they spring forward to put it into action. They are called the Servers of mankind, and have special pioneering qualities which have been developed through many lives. The great astrological sign ARIES truly typifies these people. Though born under all of the zodiacal signs, yet they all have strong in them the particular urge of the pioneer to catch the new idea and start out, not counting the cost, careless of caution and caring nothing for reward. It is the joy of action, of virgin lands, of effort, of research, which is theirs. Witness the airmen. The test pilots. The supersonic voyagers. They are a race apart. They belong to the servers. They dare and the daring is their reward. They pass on, but the way has been opened. Witness the work of Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War, and its

modern result - the RED CROSS, and war nurses. The Servers of mankind run headlong into obstacles, despite the disapproval of more conservative friends, relatives or overlords. But, they get the job done. The new path is made through the wilderness, be it geographical, social, religious, or scientific. A new and improved something is created out of what had seemed to be an impossible nothingness. A new age is born! Truly do the Servers of the world partake of a special sort of group consciousness.

Interestingly enough, in looking back over the past six or seven hundred years, the student discovers that the last quarter of each century marks the beginning of some new and improved condition which decisively affects the group consciousness of civilized humanity. This new light often centers around an outstanding historical figure who sets in motion the new ideas. About the year 1275 there began the slow movement to restore mental culture to the western world. It centered round Roger Bacon and the new concept of experimental science. It was the beginning of emergence from the Dark Ages. In 1375 began the period which is now called the Italian Renaissance, marking the revival of art and letters. The Servers were active in 1475 in the creation and development of the printing press and the dissemination of literature to the people. 1575 marks the period of Shakespeare, the perfecting of the English language, Sir Frances Bacon and the founding of modern inductive science. 1675 was the time when liberal ideas began to return to the west through the influence of secret societies expounding the ancient wisdom and advocating union of the social classes. While it was necessary to keep the light of the ancient wisdom alive, the only way it could be done was through secret societies. In those days a man literally took his life in his hands to hear the ancient wisdom which now we broadcast from the platform and over the radio. Each man took fearful oaths and obligations to protect the group and maintain the right of free thought and belief. Do we not want to keep it? That was only 300 years ago when men met at midnight in caves, to speak of the soul and life after death. Then in 1775 the social and political unrest began to work for political freedom. This developed violently into the French Revolution and the Revolutionary War in America making possible the United States.

Finally, in the period around 1875 there was laid the ground-

work for the battle against materialism which was threatening to absorb the thought of the western world. That was a time when science and religion were completely divorced. Atheism and agnosticism were increasing. In that year, 1875, The Theosophical Society was formed to bring - this time openly - the light of the ancient wisdom to all people. Its message of the continuity of consciousness, of the evolving soul, growing through life after life, of karma which explains the apparent injustices of life, showed life as a dramatic, evolutionary journey through ever better and higher bodies leading finally to the stage of the saint, the sage, and the superman. The Servers of the world were then battling against the materialism which offered license as its aim and annihilation as its reward. The Theosophical Society, now 75 years old, has become a world-wide organization. Its teachings are spreading steadily over the earth.

1975 will soon be upon us. What will be its contribution? New Servers are already being born for the new age which is upon us and for the new impulse which will then be given. One of the ideas included in the Theosophical pattern concerns the germination of the 6th sub-race of our present 5th great Race, out of which will eventually develop the 6th Root Race. The Servers will pioneer in the new race, by stressing the group ideal, the cooperative good of the whole as against the competitive effort of the individual. Part of the turmoil of the present world condition lies in the warring of those two ideas. There are even two opposing ways of dealing with the cooperative idea, the constructive and the destructive ways.

The constructive way operates for the good of the whole. If my brother in the group is trampled upon, the whole consciousness of the group is pulled awry, including my own! Since the entire trend of evolution is towards this larger group outlook, you can see that a prime characteristic of the coming Race will be its sense of human brotherhood.

It is good to be alive in a new age. It is good to feel the impact of a new group consciousness. And once again the 1975 period will surely bring another upward impulse to human endeavor. For life goes on. And it conforms to a Great Pattern.

PERSONALITY: WHAT IS IT?

Such mystery as there is in the idea of personality probably lies in the fact that no two people seem to have quite the same idea about it. Few things seem more elusive.

The word itself, personality, is used with great looseness and a wide variety of meaning. We say that someone "has lots of personality"; and we say "don't deal in personalities". And there is the popular definition that "character is what you are and personality is what people think you are." No two of these common uses of the word carry the same connotation. And none of them bears on the serious question of the nature of the human personality.

Let us remember first that every great religion in the world has taught that man is a complex creature, that he is spirit, soul, and body. So also teaches Theosophy.

In man's very highest nature he exists as spirit, "the son in the bosom of the Father" as the scriptures state. Spirit is the divine spark, "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." That light is said to shine in the heart, for those who have eyes to see.

The soul, which is the higher nature of man, is a faint reflection of that light, expressing as fully as its stage of growth will allow, the high qualities of sympathy, wisdom, and creative will. These are the deep, inner expressions of man as self and are said to reveal themselves in the eyes. What then is the personality? It is the everyday self; it is man's thoughts, his desires, and his vital nature in expression through his physical body.

Modern western psychology combines all of man's intangible nature in the one word "psyche". Theosophy clarifies that section of psychology by differentiating between the higher and lower natures, between the soul and personality as different aspects of the same person.

The personality then is the physical man plus his emotional and mental nature. And it is the tool or instrument of his higher nature - the soul. The question naturally arises here: is not mentality, or mind, synonymous with soul?

Does not the mental nature of man belong to his higher nature?

Theosophy clarifies this point also. It says that there are two fields of mental activity. That the every-day workaday mental processes concerned with duties and pleasures and plans constitute one section of mind. It is used in connection with knowledge and analysis, skills and craftsmanship, and is called in Theosophical literature "the lower mind". It is the province of the personality. But there is another, higher section of mind which is not concerned with these things. It is concerned with the abstract, with theory and synthesis and with universals, and is called in Theosophical literature "the higher mind". It is the province of the soul.

Wisdom is a soul quality. Knowledge is a personality quality. Wisdom is an eternal thing. What a man has of wisdom can never be lost in this life or in any other. But knowledge is of a single lifetime and has to be gained through education of the personality in each life as it is lived.

Perhaps it will simplify this line of thought for you if I say simply that your soul is eternal while your personality is temporary. That the enduring qualities in you of wisdom, compassion, will-power, and creative capacity are your soul qualities which you have developed through many lives and which you can never lose. And that your every-day thought and feelings and bodily conditions are of your personality and are fleeting and temporary.

But don't imagine, because the personality is temporary, lasting for one lifetime only, that it is unimportant. Remember that it is the instrument of the eternal self, or soul, for an entire lifetime. As an instrument it deserves care and respect. The physical body deserves to be healthfully fed, clothed, and rested. The emotional nature deserves controlled freedom. The mental nature deserves training and education all through life, not merely during school years. For it is these personality elements which contribute to the growth of soul qualities.

An important point which Theosophy teaches in this connection concerns man's own responsibility as to his future. It is this: only positive qualities developed in the personality

are receivable by the soul, those which are usually called the good qualities. That which is usually called evil is merely absence of good and thus contributes nothing to soul power or soul wisdom. As an example, whatever you have added for yourself during this lifetime, in understanding of and sympathy for another person has strengthened your soul capacity of compassion or of wisdom. But if, by chance, you are one who has allowed prejudices and animosities to increase as the years go by, you have simply added nothing to your soul quality and the time has been wasted. Similarly with will power, the will to endure or the will to accomplish. Your right use of will has increased your soul power of will. But if, by chance, you have not been able to endure or to keep at a thing until you have accomplished it, you have simply added nothing to your soul quality in this respect and, from the long-range point of view, the time has been wasted.

Similar failures may in some cases be called by men in the world evil, or even sin. From the egoic, or soul's standpoint they are simply negative.

It is encouraging to know that whatever you develop in this lifetime as a strengthening of your higher nature, is yours forever and cannot be lost. That is the responsibility of the personality to the soul, of the lesser part of yourself to the greater part of yourself.

There is another way in which you build your future and by which you are the product of your own past. It reveals itself in the processes of reincarnation. The next personality through which you, as an evolving soul, will express yourself, can begin its life only with the type of mentality and the kind of emotions which are characteristic of you when you end this life, this incarnation. Whatever you make of your personality now will set the key of that new personality which will be yours in your next incarnation. All of the ethical, religious, and moral teachings of the world are intended to help humanity in this forward move.

So, to sum up. Theosophy teaches that the soul is the eternal, evolving part of man. And it teaches that the personality is the temporary part of man and exists to feed the soul, as it were, and to speed it forward in its evolution.

Not let us see what contemporary science has to say in this connection. One group of psychologists reduces all of man to his physical functions, calling mental processes "emanations from the brain", and emotions "reactions from glandular activity". Another group, more concerned with parapsychology and psychic research recognize that there is a distinction between soul and body. They define the soul or "psyche" as "a non-physical entity made up of thought, volition, emotion, morality, and aspiration" with the body for agent.

The London Society for Psychic Research which has for some years been specializing in personality research has come to a few conclusions which I would like to share with you. They say "The slight probings which we have made reveal at one stroke that the domain of the real extends beyond the ordinary cognitive faculty". They have recorded so many instances of supernormal consciousness that they conclude that the personality is a specific set-up constructed to function in a specific and limited field, called normal consciousness: that something extends beyond the normal consciousness; and that that "something" is graded in its quality. That is their careful and exploratory way of describing what Theosophy speaks of as young souls and old souls. The closing chapter of one of their recent books, called "The Personality of Man" by G.N.M. Tyrrell, contains this sentence - "All the evidence hangs together. However diverse, it all points to a region of personality behind consciousness and hidden from view."

Which is exactly what Theosophy has been saying through the centuries. Behind the everyday personality and hidden from view is the larger consciousness of evolving man, the human soul. And as an expression of and instrument for the soul there is that which we in our daily life know as the human personality. Through it we work and play - or we loaf. Through it we grow and develop - or we stagnate. Through it we create our own future and create our own character.

THE EGO AND HIS VEHICLES

Theosophy, in its scientific aspect, studies man in all his varying phases of consciousness; and it describes man as "consciousness clothed in seven bodies."

That certainly sounds strange to anyone unfamiliar with the idea that man is more than the person we see when we shake hands with him. But the ancient wisdom calls man a "living, conscious, thinking SELF -- the individuality"; and it calls the various casings in which this SELF is enclosed "bodies", since each such casing enables the SELF to function in some definite region of the universe, or in some specific phase of consciousness.

For example, when we meet our friend we grasp his physical hand. That hand is warm by virtue of the "etheric double" which permeates it and which is the vehicle of the nervous system. This etheric double, or vital body, is an exact counterpart of the physical body and can be seen extending slightly beyond it by scientific instruments, or by trained sight.

The next garment, or vehicle, of the man is his emotional body, through which he feels pleasure or boredom while shaking hands. Beyond that is the concrete mental body through which he recognizes the person he is shaking hands with. These three bodies, etheric, emotional and mental, together with the physical body we see, are properties of the personality and are for this one life only. The higher, more subtle, bodies are permanent vehicles of the reincarnating ego.

Of these, the abstract mental body is called the Causal, C-A-U-S-A-L, body. It is the first of man's bodies over which the Angel of Death has no power, since it is an egoic vehicle and endures from age to age. In it is stored up all that man has garnered in each incarnation; hence its very name of Causal Body, since all causes that will affect his future incarnations reside in it.

Higher yet is another body, which is that of United Consciousness, and is called the Buddhic or Bliss body. In it the inner man knows himself to be one with other consciousnesses or individualities, and barriers between man and man

fall away. This is a high state of spiritual consciousness. In the average man it is very rarely employed, and thus this Buddhic body is undeveloped and unorganized.

Therein lies the difference between an undeveloped individuality and one who is highly evolved. The highly evolved person has learned through many lives of experience to use, and function through, these vehicles of the ego. For it is to be remembered that a man is one and the same man on whatever plane of consciousness he may be functioning. His triumph comes when he can function on all five planes in unbroken consciousness. Those Great Teachers whom Theosophy calls "Men made perfect", function in full consciousness on all the great planes of nature from the spiritual level right down to that of the physical body. Those rare individuals who are able to remember their past incarnations are people who are able to function in the Causal body. Before that stage of development it is impossible, except in momentary flashes. Dr. Besant explains that "As man advances, flashes of consciousness break forth as memory and illumine fragments from the past; but these flashes need to change to a steady light ere any consecutive memory can arise."

At this Causal Body level, man's consciousness is known as his ego, the "I" used in the philosophical sense of "I know that I exist." Now it is this higher consciousness who is the friend and overseer of our everyday lives. He is our guide and inspiration, the noblest side of our inmost nature.

Can we obtain any understanding of the life of this "ego" upon his own plane? First we must remember that he dwells at the higher mental level where consciousness is not limited; the physical divisions of life into past, present, and future, or far, distant, and near are almost entirely transcended, so that they no longer limit our comprehension of ideas and situations. The ego may be said to know without the need of analytical thinking. Situations are understood at a glance; intricate systems of philosophy are expressed and comprehended in one flash of consciousness; great symphonies exist in their totality at that level and can be grasped by the causal consciousness as a complete and perfect whole.

The important thing to remember in all this is that the

personality, the everyday self, can begin gradually to share in that greater, egoic life. As one's emotional and mental vehicles become purified and one's powers of perception extended, one transcends the limitations of those lower worlds. Fetters fall away one by one, and the man begins to function as the Ego, as his greater Self.

Already, in our moments of exaltation and inspiration, we feel the touch of the Immortal Self upon us, producing a consciousness of power, of wisdom, and of strong rhythms playing through us. One day, in this or another life, we shall enter into full possession of that world and our consciousness will be centered there. Then we will not be limited to one piece of work at a time; we shall be able to operate in all the three lower levels of consciousness at once even though the work may be of different kinds and in different places - for you are where your thoughts are - and we may at the same time maintain activity at the causal level.

I am aware that to the normal mind, where we now stand, such a condition sounds impossibly far advanced. It seems that the command of the Christ "Be ye perfect" means infinitely more than merely being perfectly good; it means being perfectly wise, perfectly compassionate, and perfect in power over all the elements in nature put at our disposal. To the egoic consciousness all these are possible. In some measure they are even now being achieved by such as are very, very earnest students. They are actually within the reach of all. This world of unlimited service is ours to enter, and Theosophy is a key which will unlock the door. The great thing is to begin.

In this as in all things, knowledge is power. "We may start with the assumption that it is possible to help the world and our fellows from the egoic level, as well as from the mental, emotional and physical levels. Even if our physical limitations are too great for us to do much at present, we can endeavor to reach a working agreement, so to speak, with our own Ego, so that he may include us more and more in his activities and may take on, at his level, the work which we wish to do, and which, as done by him in conjunction with his personal self, will be far more effective than anything possible to that personal self alone.

As a matter of fact, the ego of any person is eager to have

the cooperation of his personality, who is his agent in the physical world, and who at times makes an effort to get a closer approach. It is our own indifference and inertia which prevents the fuller life.

The barrier to all of this, for us, is that selfishness in varying forms in the personality creates a bar to the egoic life of joy and splendor, for his joy comes through continual service to mankind and through ceaseless work for the thinning of the veil of darkness which lies like a pall on the spirits of men.

"The progress of humanity through this long age of darkness depends greatly upon the efforts of individuals. All great reforms owe their initial impulse to the vision of some one woman or one man. The emancipation of the world calls for superhuman efforts by those who would truly serve. The task would seem impossible were it not that behind each man there is the heavenly man ... Vast spiritual energies are locked up in the deepest self of even the humblest member of the human race. The spirit-to-help stands eternally at the doorway of the soul and knocks. Few answer; fewer still open the door. That closed doorway to the heart of humanity is the greatest tragedy of human life; for limitless power, all-embracing wisdom, and perfect knowledge lie as yet unused in the inner recesses of man's being, and this to which every man is heir, remains undiscovered and unused even in his hours of greatest need." *

When once we begin purposefully to live and work as an ego, we shall increase our efficiency enormously and give to all our activities the mark of greatness and permanency. As the egoic life begins to pour more freely through us, we shall find that we have greater health, greater understanding, and greater power to serve humanity.

* Man, the Triune God: Geoffrey Hodson

